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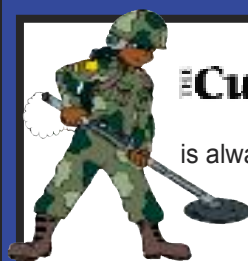
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Jumping Out of a Helicopter-Just Another Day at Work
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nasjrbnolasuggestion@gmail.com

THE Currents™

Vol. 25 No. 9

Serving the New Orleans Regional Military/DoD Communities

September 2014

Army Reserve's Largest Command Has New Leader

By Sgt. Devin Wood
215th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

On Aug. 16, Soldiers from the 377th Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) and honored guests gathered to celebrate one of the U.S. military's longest standing traditions; the change of command ceremony, held at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans.

After 27 months of leadership, Maj. Gen. Peter S. Lennon of Newport News, Va., relinquished his command of the Army Reserve's largest command.

"It's a bittersweet day for me," said Lennon. "These Soldiers have continually amazed me. We have become more expeditionary, more ready and relevant as a command."

"General Lennon is a visionary," said Command Sgt. Maj. Nagee Lunde, senior enlisted leader of the command. "He's a great leader, a great sustainer, a great transporter and a general officer who really believes in Soldiers and their capabilities. He provided the vision and the Soldiers rose to the challenge."

Assuming command of the 377th is Maj. Gen. Leslie J. Carroll of Covington, Ga.



Maj. Gen. Leslie J. Carroll, left, passes the colors of the 377th TSC to Command Sgt. Maj. Nagee Lunde, signaling the beginning of his role as commanding general during a change of command ceremony on Aug. 16, at NAS JRB New Orleans.

*Photo by Sgt. Devin Wood
215th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

During Lennon's command, the Army began transitioning from an Army of operation to an Army of preparation, a path that will continue.

"There is no big direction shift," said Carroll. "We are just going to keep transitioning and providing the level of

readiness required."

There is strong confidence in the direction of the command and the leadership of the future.

"General Carroll is the right guy," said

New Leader on Page 8

Finance Soldiers Deploy to the Middle East

By Sgt. 1st Class Chantell Black
215th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Though President Barack Obama has ordered the draw-down of troops recruited in support of the war, a New Orleans based Army Reserve unit gathered together with family and friends at the World War II Museum in New Orleans, Saturday morning, Aug. 2, to say their final goodbyes as they deploy overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The unit deploying in support of OEF is the 469th Financial Management Support Center, based at the James H. Diamond Army Reserve Center in the Gentilly area of New

Orleans. The 469th FMSC is a subordinate unit of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans in Belle Chasse, La.

The 469th FMSC is expecting to deploy to Kuwait and is planning on being further separated into six individual teams that will be providing technical oversight and management for all finance units in theater, including Qatar, Jordan and Afghanistan.

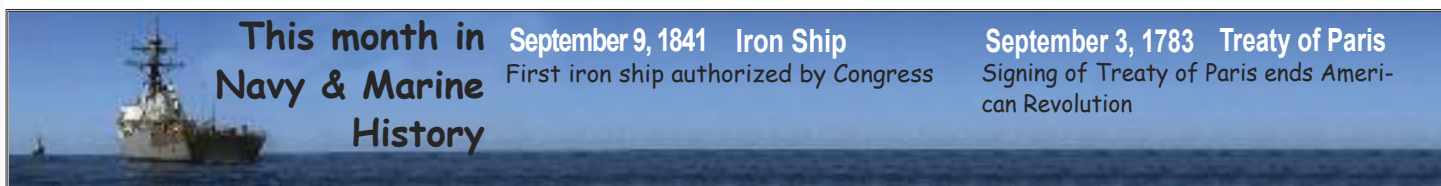
The 469th FMSC was established in New Orleans in 1991, it is actually on its third wartime deployment in support of wartime mission requirements. The 469th first deployed to Iraq and Kuwait in 2003 through 2004 for Op-



Sgts. 1st Class Makisicha Lee and Orlando Kelley listen to the guest speakers at the 469th Financial Management Support Center's farewell ceremony at the World War II Museum in New Orleans, on Aug. 2. The unit is deploying to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chantell Black

erations Iraqi Freedom and deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2008 through 2009 the unit de-



This month in Navy & Marine History

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September 3, 1783 Treaty of Paris
Signing of Treaty of Paris ends American Revolution

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By Capt. Scott Gootee
NAS JRB Commanding Officer

I want to thank the NAS JRB New Orleans commands and residents for their patience during the recent scheduled power outage over Labor Day weekend. The outage was necessary to improve reliability of electrical power to the base as we are in the midst of a \$4.8M project to replace our dated power distribution system. All of the underground conduit installation is complete and the installation of the new power cables is ongoing. We will soon be ready to convert the base from the old system to the new. Part of that process was to connect the new cables to the primary substation on base and this required a complete shutdown of base power. Bravo Zulu to Public Works and MWR for keeping the pool open and extending the hours at Boon-doggles – all done with generators!

With summer's end, classes are back in session at Belle Chasse Academy and in local schools. These changes significantly impact traffic flow on base and off. School in session also activates speed zones on Highway 23 and increases pedestrian traffic on base along Russell Ave. I ask that you be on the lookout for pedestrians and bicyclists. Speed can lead to unintended consequences and we should drive slowly, especially in school zones or near bus stops. Obey school crossing guards and stop for all school buses picking up and dropping off children.



Parents should remind their children to walk, not ride bicycles, across crosswalks. Also, what occurs inside your vehicle has an impact on road safety. Remember that cell phone use while driving is not permitted on base and text messaging while driving is illegal. Keep it safe!

As we are all aware, hurricane season ends Nov. 30 – with the peak of the season being mid-August to late October – a peak we now occupy. We are approaching (knock on wood) the downward side of what has been a relatively quiet hurricane season, but that does not mean we are done! I remind all that we cannot let our guard down or stow away our hurricane preparedness kits. Our emergency management and response team remains vigilant to alert you and your family to any threats to our region. I ask each of you to also remain watchful and ready to act as circumstances may necessitate.

And finally, the 2014 Greater New Orleans Navy Ball is Oct. 18 at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. Our Navy Ball committee has worked diligently to plan this event, and raise funds so we can offer very affordable tickets to all hands, regardless of their rank. For tickets and more information contact your department's Navy Ball Representative.



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THE Currents

Vol. 25 No. 9 September 2014

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The next issue of The Currents will be published on Wednesday, October 1, 2014. Questions concerning content for publication are heartily encouraged and must be received at the Public Affairs Office, Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB), 400 Russell Ave., New Orleans, LA, 70143-5012, phone (504) 678-3260, by close of business on Friday, September 19, 2014.

The appearance of advertising in this newspaper, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsements by the Department of Defense, the Navy, NAS JRB, or The Polo Company of the products and services advertised. Everything advertised in this newspaper shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. If a violation or rejection of this equal opportunity policy by an advertiser is confirmed, the publisher shall refuse to print advertising from that source until the violation is corrected.



**Naval Air Station JRB New Orleans
Capt. Scott Gootee**

Commanding Officer



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Tuition Assistance Policy Changing in Fiscal 15

By Naval Education and Training
Command Public Affairs Office

Effective immediately, commanding officers and officers-in-charge may approve waivers to the one-year requirement that Sailors must be on board their first permanent

duty station (PDS) to be eligible for Tuition Assistance (TA) according to NAVADMIN 190/14 released Aug. 21.

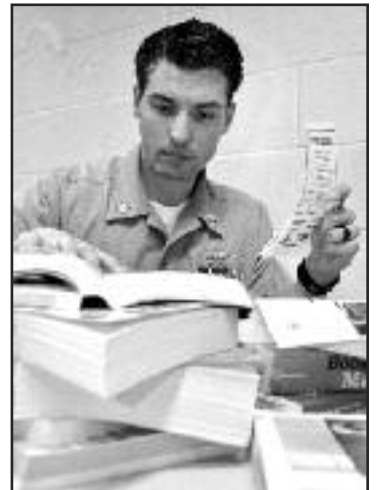
In addition to command triad waiver approval, Sailors must meet all existing requirements for participation eligibility.

The NAVADMIN also de-

tailed changes to the grade and fee policy for TA for courses stating after Oct. 1 to align with recent Department of Defense TA policy.

Successful course completion will be defined as a grade of "C" or higher for undergraduate courses, a "B" or higher for graduate courses,

and a "Pass" for "Pass/Fail" grades and must be attained to avoid reimbursement of TA funding. Reimbursement will also be required from Sailors who don't make up a grade of "I" (incomplete) by the educational institutions' deadline or six months after the completion of the class, whichever



Official U.S. Navy file photo comes first.

Also changing Oct. 1, only tuition directly related to the course of instruction - and not including fees - will be paid with TA funds. Fees no longer covered by TA include equipment, supplies, books/materials, exams, admissions, registration, fines and costs associated with distance learning.

These changes align the Navy's policy with Department of Defense Instruction 1322.25 for Voluntary Education (VOLED) programs covering policies for service members' use of TA.

"Historically, more than 85 percent of Sailors satisfactorily complete and pass their undergraduate and/or graduate level classes; this is a tribute to the focus and dedication of the Sailors using VOLEP programs," said Ernest D'Antonio, the Center for Personal and Professional Development's (CPPD) Navy VOLEP program director.

In fiscal 2013, approximately 89 percent of courses paid for by TA were successfully passed, with 72 percent of those courses resulting in an "A" or "B" grade, according to D'Antonio.

Sailors not successfully completing courses using TA must reimburse the Navy for TA funds.

For more information Sailors can contact a Navy College Office, Virtual Education Center (VEC) or the Navy College Program website at <http://www.navycollege.navy.mil/>.

For more information about the Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD), visit: <https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/cppd/>.

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Veteran Paddles to Raise Awareness for Post-Traumatic Stress

By Cpl. J. Gage Karwick
U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve

Hazy rain clouds settled overhead as the tides of the ever-flowing mighty Mississippi River bashed on the shoreline on the Westbank of New Orleans at Algiers Point.

With a crowd of gathering Marines focusing their eyes on a small silhouette in the distance, their voices raised in excitement and cheering as the wearisome paddler made his way to them.

Former Marine combat veteran, Joshua Ploetz, began paddling his approximate 2,575-mile journey down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico from Lake Itasca in Minnesota, May 19, to raise awareness for post-traumatic stress for veterans currently caught in their own internal war.

Ploetz was surprised July 25,

2014 when he paddled around the turn at Algiers Point and was greeted by a large group of Marines, Sailors, veterans and family members waiting on the shore of the Mississippi River to cheer him on.

"We wanted to support his efforts," said Cpl. Christopher J. Cox, an adjutant's clerk with 4th Marine Logistics Group. "It was great to see the shock on his face because he didn't know we were going to be down there."

The planning for the canoe trip began two years ago, when Ploetz outlined his stops and how much food he was going to take. He also estimated how hard he would have to paddle to make his 50-mile a day goal.

As Ploetz reached the shoreline, tears began to form not only in his eyes, but in the eyes of those gathered as well.

"Eight years ago I got out of the Marine Corps and I thought everything was going ok, just

like everything I ever did, you push on," said Ploetz. "I started drinking a lot, got married, divorced and struggled a lot. Then I finally met a guy who wrote a book about traveling down the Mississippi River. He always told me 'It's like a vision quest for spirituality, where you find yourself on the river', and I think coming out of the Marine Corps, I was trying to find myself."

Ploetz spoke to the assembled group, recounting stories of his time in the Marine Corps. He also offered advice to the Marines about life after military service.

"Keeping yourself busy was the biggest thing I found," said Ploetz. "Trying to find things that I could connect with, because you connect with the Marine Corps and that's a part of your life that you can't have back. You can't just put your cammies back on."

Many of the Marines clung



Joshua Ploetz, a former Marine, makes his way to shore before being greeted by a crowd of Marines, Sailors, veterans and family members as he paddles closer to the end of his 2,575-mile journey down the Mississippi River, in New Orleans, July 25. Ploetz began his journey to raise awareness for post-traumatic stress May 19, at Lake Itasca in Minnesota.

Photo by Cpl. J. Gage Karwick

to the advice Ploetz gave, and were moved by the sentiment of the passing of knowledge from one Marine to another.

"He is pushing it to the limit. He said when he was done with this he was also going to run the Marine Corps marathon,"

said Cox. "Even though he is not in uniform anymore, he is still out there turning it on. For me, being a corporal, it's amazing to see that it doesn't matter if you get out or if you stay in, you will always be in the fight."

Army Corps Maintains Physically Challenged Hunt Area

By Rene Poché
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Indian Bayou Area, maintained by the US Army Corps of Engineers, is located in South-Central Louisiana. It was established in 1995 to provide public access and environmental protection in the Atchafalaya Basin. The area encompasses 28,500 acres located in St.



USACE graphic image

Landry and St. Martin parishes and is located between Baton Rouge and Lafayette, north of Interstate 10 and south of U.S.

Hwy 190, west of the Atchafalaya River.

In addition to the special seasons and trails available to

hunters with disabilities, a 350-acre hunting area is reserved exclusively for wheelchair bound deer hunters. For safety reasons, this area is closed for all other activities and access from Sept. 1 through Feb. 28.

Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register to use a hunting blind, please call the Port Barre office at (337) 585-0853.

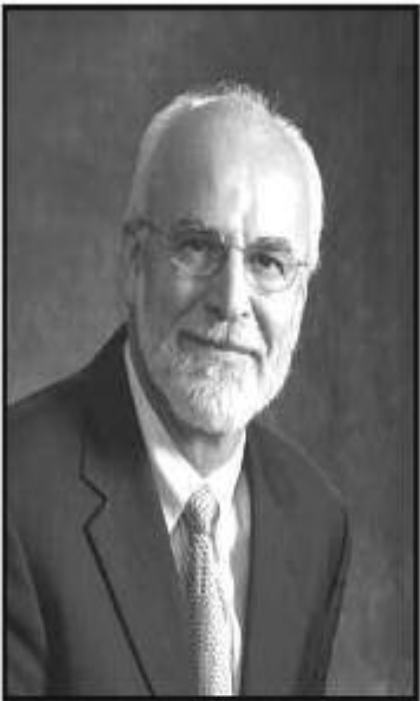
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For full details visit the USACE's website:

<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/AtchafalayaBasin.aspx>.

The Indian Bayou Area hunting guide is available as a link on the bottom right side of the webpage.





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Naval Security Forces (NSF) personnel, MA2 Travis Pressler, MA3 David Correia, MA3 Melanie Schwartz and MA1 Jason Betts, practice close combat and room clearing techniques during an active shooter exercise at the Navy Exchange aboard NAS JRB New Orleans July 22. NSF regularly train with tenants on base to evaluate the capabilities to respond and react to security scenarios. These training scenarios are one of many drills to heighten NAS JRB New Orleans force protection posture.
Photo by MCI John Hulle



The Greater New Orleans Navy Birthday Ball celebrating the Navy's 239th birthday is set for Saturday, Oct. 18, at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. For more information Sailors can speak with their command's Navy Ball representative.

New Leader:*continued from Page 1*

Lennon. "He has the right knowledge, the right connections, and a great way of dealing with people. The ship is on a good course, and he is going

to go full throttle."

The respect these two senior leaders hold for one another was evident throughout the ceremony. When Carroll took the

podium, he commended his forerunner on a job well-done. "Pete, I love you for passing on such a great legacy, and I hate you for doing such a good job,"

said Carroll jokingly. "You will be hard to follow."

Carroll takes the reigns of the Army Reserves largest command with more than 36,000

soldiers and 700 Department of the Army civilians in 34 states. The 377th TSC has been in the New Orleans community since 1948.

Be Our Guest

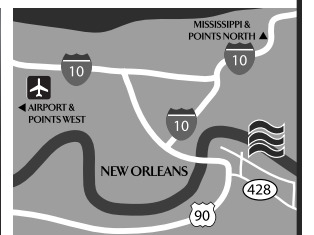
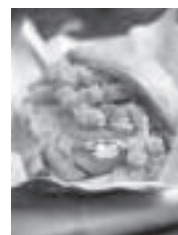


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Safety is Key When Packing Parachutes

By Cpl. Jonathan Lobre
215th Mobile Public Affairs DET

"I will be sure - always," said Army Pvt. Nathan Dougherty, one of the more experienced parachute packers assigned to the 421st Quartermaster Company (QM) from Fort Valley, Ga. "That motto is etched in the minds of all riggers from the very first day of Rigger School."

According to Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Harris, senior technician of the 421st QM, a unit within the 377th Theater Sustainment Command at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans, "The motto is the most important thing you can learn in school. If you follow that, then safety always remains the number one priority, and that's why in my 16 years with the unit we have not had any major accidents."

Military personnel around the world depend on the specialized work performed by the Soldiers of the 421st QM. Established in 1959, today the 421st consists of about 60 riggers who live and train together, with safety being the number one priority.

Whether dropping needed supplies, such as MREs, water, gas, ammunition, or heavier cargo, such as tanks or trucks, or preparing parachutes for military personnel, the process of packing a parachute requires attention to detail, patience and skill.

Packing is monotonous, and accountability is stressed every step of the way. Riggers and inspectors must certify and sign a sheet at the end of every packing station once the chute is completely packed. Additionally a small booklet is signed and attached to one of the risers of every parachute system.

Further ensuring accountability, packers must get recertified every 90 days; inspectors every 180 days. The recertification process consists of correctly packing four parachutes consistently and jumping with the fifth chute.

"We thrive off a system of checks and balances," said Army Sgt. Christopher Loveless, a former U.S. Marines in-



Army Sgt. Sean Bryant, an inspector of the packers with the 421st Quartermaster Company, checks the folds of his fellow packer at NAS JRB New Orleans. Bryant is confirming that there are no extra folds and everything is straight before the parachute can be put into the bag.

Army photos by Cpl. Jonathan J. Lobre



A close up view of the weaving process of break lines through the sack. Riggers and inspectors must certify and sign a sheet at the end of every packing station once the chute is completely packed. Additionally a small booklet is signed and attached to one of the risers of every parachute system.

fantryman. "The riggers pack the chutes, the in-processing inspectors inspect them, and the jumpmasters conduct a final inspection."

Safety is also built into the parachute systems by giving them a shelf life based on type and utility. The 421st QM uses a multitude of different parachutes depending on the mission. The chutes range from the steerable MC1-1 and MC-6, to the non-steerable T-10, to the free-fall MC-4. Additionally, the 421st employs the parachute G-12 for heavy cargo drops.

Through all the details of

packing a parachute, the enormous responsibilities of each individual, and the behind-the-scenes work that gets done, one thing remains true among the riggers of the 421st Quartermaster Company: "I will be sure - always."

"I live for my chute," said Dougherty as he wiped sweat from his brow. "Even though the inspector has nine rigger checks on my chute, it's my life on the line and I have to be confident in my abilities."

The 421st exemplifies trust, cohesiveness, morale and determination needed to fulfill its



Army Pvt. Nathan Dougherty, a packer with the 421st Quartermaster Company out of Fort Valley, Ga., finishes up his back by tying it closed. Dougherty and the other team members use break string, which once under the weight of the jumper, will break allowing the parachute system to employ. The training took place at a hangar in late July at NAS JRB New Orleans.

mission no matter the task.

"If you can fit it in the plane,"

said Sgt. Loveless, "we can make it work."

Jumping Out of a Helicopter-Just Another Day at Work

By Cpl. Jonathan Lobre
215th Mobile Public Affairs DET

A Bell UH-1 (Huey) helicopter soars 1,500 feet above Stennis Space Center International Airport in Kiln, Miss., on Aug. 6. Four Soldiers from the 421st Quartermaster Company (QM) stare out into the blue with static lines hooked up ready to make their jump.

"I always wanted to jump," said Army 1st Lt. Neil Hamel, a newly-commissioned officer with the 421st. "The adrenaline rush from jumping out the door, clearing your head after the chaos of the world spinning under you while your parachute opens, and enjoying the great view and peace once you're floating through the air; it's a great experience."

A great experience like this doesn't come without challenge, according to Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Harris, a senior technician with the 421st.

Countless hours are spent preparing to make these two-minute jumps possible, from finding an aircraft and checking the weather to organizing medical personnel.

"A lot of guys don't see everything that goes into a jump," said Harris.

Before any jumps are made, the day begins with sustained airborne training, required within 24 hours of each jump. Training consists of standard operating procedures of a jump. In addition, the trainers cover how Soldiers will be strapped into the Huey helicopter, review jump commands, and go over the different landing falls.

"In the rigger community, we call today's jump a 'Hollywood Jump,'" said Army Sgt. William Walker. "We are just jumping out one side of the helicopter with no rucksacks or any added weight besides the chute, so it should be a smooth and easy jump."

Finally, the moment of truth; it's jump time.

A Huey lands and four soldiers hook up. It takes off, circling around the airfield waiting for the command to jump. Crews on the ground direct the jump to ensure everything runs smoothly.

"I prepare the drop zone with



A UH-1 Helicopter from HMLA - 773 at NAS JRB New Orleans takes off with Soldiers from the 421st Quartermaster Company heading for Stennis Space Center International Airport in Miss., Aug. 6. The Soldiers, from Fort Valley, Ga., were taken to an altitude of 1,500 feet before jumping from the aircraft.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Timothy Fischer



An Army soldier's parachute opens as another soldier exits the Huey helicopter 1,500 feet in the air at Stennis Space Center International Airport. The soldiers with the 421st Quartermaster Company must wait six seconds for their parachutes to fully open.

Army photo by Cpl. Jonathan J. Lobre

the landing marker that indicates where the soldiers should try to land based on the wind," said Army Sgt. William Robertson, a pathfinder with the 421st. "I also

give the bird the command to execute the drop of personnel and need to make sure I can see all chutes are fully deployed once they are dropped."

No matter the preference of parachute or jumping out of a high-performance fixed-wing plane or a helicopter, the responsibilities demanded from

these Soldiers is well worth the reward of flying through the skies by the sound of cheers as they float down and the smiles when they land.

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159th Airmen Now Home Following Kuwait Deployment

By 2nd Lt. Larissa Lambert
159th Fighter Wing
Public Affairs Office

KENNER, La. — Airmen from the 159th Security Forces Squadron, Louisiana Air National Guard, stationed at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, in Belle Chasse, La., returned home from a five-month deployment during a welcome-home event in New Orleans, Aug. 7.

The Airmen were greeted by family, friends and co-workers when they arrived at Louis Armstrong International Airport.

“We enjoy meeting the families and friends, passing out flags, designing welcome home signs, while being a part of their new beginning,” said Cherie Spooner, Airman and Family Readiness Program manager. “Homecoming is a



Returning 159th Security Forces Squadron members smile upon seeing friends and family after their five-month deployment to Kuwait.

family affair and I’m happy that Family Programs is a part of the celebration.”

The unit was deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, where they provided operational support, strategic readiness, and fostered host-nation

relations.

“Our main mission was to protect all the resources and assets for the base,” said 1st Lt Kevin Goodlett, 159th SFS operations officer. “The majority of our Airmen performed the operational standpoint for the main base, but



Airmen from the Louisiana Air National Guard’s 159th Security Forces Squadron, receive a warm welcome Aug. 7 at Louis Armstrong International Airport in Kenner, La., upon their return home from a five-month deployment. The unit was deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, where they provided operational support, strategic readiness, and fostered host-nation relations.

Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Dan Farrell, 159th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

we were also assigned a protection detail for a geographically separated unit.”

This recent deployment marks the eighth in support of OEF for the squadron. The

159th SFS has also participated in emergency response and recovery missions for several hurricanes, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 and the ice storms earlier this year.

Belle Chasse Academy Meetings Notices

Board of Directors

September Meeting -

1 September 2014 • 7 p.m. at BCA

October Meeting -

6 October 2014 • 7 p.m. at BCA

Please check the BCA web site for Board of Directors Committees Meetings and PTO Meeting

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First-Term Sailors Gain Career Knowledge Through PACT

By Navy Personnel
Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. (NNS) — The Professional Apprenticeship Career Track (PACT) program provides unique career opportunities for some first-term Sailors through apprentice-level formal and on-the-job training within a 24-month period.

The main purpose of PACT is to provide Sailors who are unsure about which Navy career fields interest them an opportunity to learn about different Navy jobs without having to make a decision at the time of enlistment. The PACT program has three apprentice tracks encompassing career fields within aviation (A-PACT), engineering (E-PACT) and surface (S-PACT).

“PACT places the Sailor in a better position to choose from a variety of ratings and gives them a chance to see a rating in its entirety,” said Chief Navy Counselor (SW/EXW/AW) Jesse Reed, Navy Personnel Command Force career counselor. “The Sailor is provided an opportunity to learn more about a particular rate in order to better make a decision about what path they would like to follow.”

Soon after checking aboard their first command, PACT Sailors will meet with

their command career counselor and immediate chain of command to discuss personal and professional goals. They will also discuss rating or job eligibility for potential ratings via the Career Waypoint (C-WAY) system, conduct required Career Development Boards (CDB), PACT designation quotas, and potential time-in-rate eligibility for participation in the Navywide advancement exams.

“It is detrimental to the Sailor if commands are not engaging with the progression of their PACT designated Sailors,” added Reed.

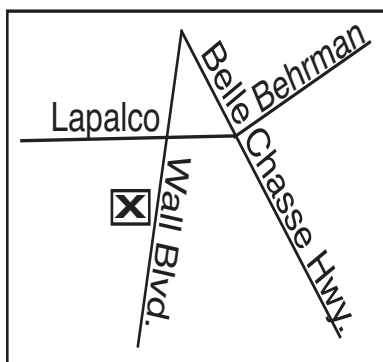
PACT Sailors who are not designated into a specific rating within 12-months on board their first duty station may apply for an available Navy “A” school quota provided that they have maintained PACT program and “A” school eligibility. If a Sailor has not received a quota into a new rating within the original 24-month window, their projected rotation date will extend to their end of active obligated service. If they don’t pick up a rating by their EAOS, they will be separated.

For more information about PACT information visit the following sites: <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/enlisted/detailing/shorespecialprograms/Pages/PACTDetailing.aspx>, and <https://www.cool.navy.mil/enlisted/pact.htm>.

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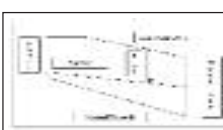


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La. Air National Guard Hosts Air Combat Training Exercise

By Air Force 2nd Lt. Hampton
159th Fighter Wing
Public Affairs Office

The Louisiana Air National Guard's 159th Fighter Wing concluded their two-week Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT) with the 43rd Fighter Squadron, based in Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans, which began on July 18, 2014.

With multiple aircraft participating in the realistic war-type scenario, the combat training also provided a group of eight students new to the F-22 Raptor an opportunity to fight in simulated multi-aircraft war missions. The flying event staged the culmination of the air combat tactics training course.

"NAS JRB New Orleans offers a lot of training opportunities for air-to-air missions. The Louisiana Air National Guard's F-15Cs integrate with F-22s to ensure air dominance," said Col. Thomas "Cannibal" Sostarics, commander of the 159th FW. "It's a lethal combination!"

"This training has been the most robust ... we have brought more jets than ever



An F-22 Raptor from Tyndall AFB, Fla., taxis for takeoff at NAS JRB New Orleans. The Louisiana Air National Guard's 159th Fighter Wing participated and hosted F-22 Raptor and T-38 Talon aircraft and personnel from the 43rd Fighter Squadron at Tyndall in dissimilar air combat training (DACT) at NAS JRB New Orleans. During the training, which is conducted in a reserved air space over the Gulf of Mexico, various aircraft swap adversarial roles as they are pitted against each other.

*Air National Guard photo
by Master Sgt. Dan Farrell, 159th FW Public Affairs*

before. The training has been world-class," said Lt. Col. Glen "Nugget" Richards, director of operations for the 43rd FS.

The 43rd FS brought 14 F-22 Raptors and eight T-38 Talons to integrate into combat exercises with a squadron of F-15C Eagles belonging to

the 159th FW.

The training incorporated bomber escort with participation from a B-52 Stratofortress out of Barksdale Air

Force Base, Bossier City, La. All aircraft combined to fly 352 sorties in a reserved air space over the Gulf of Mexico.

Blue Ridge Now Second Oldest Behind Constitution

By Mass Communication Specialist
3rd Class Kelby Sanders
USS Blue Ridge Public Affairs

BUSAN, South Korea (NNS) — U.S. 7th Fleet flagship USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) now holds the honor of being the oldest ship in the U.S. Navy's active duty fleet, next to USS Constitution, after the decommissioning of the USS Denver (LPD 9) Aug. 14.

Blue Ridge's keel was laid Feb. 27, 1967, and she was commissioned Nov. 14, 1970. Since 1970 the flagship has had a rich history to include commanding Operations Eagle Pull and Frequent Wind during the Vietnam War, receiving the Humanitarian Service Medal in 1984 for rescuing Vietnamese refugees

during Operation Boat People, performing a nine-and-a-half month deployment as flagship for U.S. Naval Forces Central Command during the Persian Gulf War and rushing supplies and relief to Japan during Operation Tomodachi.

"Blue Ridge has a rich history of providing our Navy with the most capable afloat command platform in the world," said Blue Ridge Commanding Officer Capt. Richard McCormack.

To maintain her position as the most capable flagship in the world, Blue Ridge utilizes the most advanced communication satellite and computer technologies available.

"Blue Ridge has a superior and more robust communications system than any other

type of ship by far," said Cmdr. Hezekiah Natta, Blue Ridge communications officer.

As the demands of the mission evolve over the years, so too must Blue Ridge. The ship is constantly updating its equipment to stay a step ahead of its competition.

"Last year we did a complete overhaul and upgraded our communications equipment to allow us to continue our mission well into the future," said Natta.

In 2016 Blue Ridge is scheduled to install a brand new Consolidated Afloat Network Enterprise System (CANES).

"CANES will provide the ship and her staff the capability to continue efficiently commanding and controlling

all of 7th Fleet's assets in her area of responsibility," said Natta.

At every port the ship visits, the crew and embarked staff participate in community service engagements designed to promote peace, partnership and cooperative security. The mission requires Sailors who take pride in their service and hard work.

"It's a great opportunity to serve and be part of U.S. Navy history," said Ship's Serviceman 2nd Class Terrence Daye. "I feel good knowing I play a critical role in something great and meaningful to the command mission."

Blue Ridge's mission is unique and requires a top-of-the-line crew ready to respond, at a moment's notice, to any

threat or humanitarian crisis.

"I'm honored to command this ship knowing she will continue, well into the future, to play the lead role in promoting stability and theater security cooperation in the Pacific," said McCormack.

The flagship is currently on patrol in the Indo-Asia-Pacific with embarked 7th Fleet staff, Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 12 and Marines from Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team Pacific.

Blue Ridge has been forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan for 34 years. As the flagship for Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, Vice Adm. Robert L. Thomas, Blue Ridge is vital in maintaining partnerships in the 7th Fleet area of operations.


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September Prompts Navy Emphasis on Suicide Prevention

By Lt. j.g. Solomon Lloyd
NAS JRB Chaplain



The month of September is full of excitements, celebrations and various kinds of pleasant emphasis.

The excitement begins with our children's return to school from a time of vacationing; the National Football League kicks off leading to Super Bowl XLIX; and the arrival of Fall season.

In the pot of excitements, our

nation will celebrate the contributions American workers have made to the strength, prosperity and economic well-being of this country on Sept. 1, Labor Day as well as Grandparents on Sept. 7. These are a few of the exciting and celebratory things I thought to mention.

Subsequently, September

presents a unique emphasis for the Navy. It is Suicide Prevention Month. The theme of 2014 Navy Suicide Prevention Month is "Every Sailor, Every Day." This theme encourages all of us to utilize our ordinary gifts of relationship building and open communication to achieve extraordinary things like preventing suicide. Suicide is serious and life is too precious to lose; therefore, let each one reach one each day and every day.

You Religious Ministry Team onboard NAS JRB

would like to remind you of the Applied Suicide Intervention Training (ASIST) and Safe TALK which are available via our CREDO Deck in Gulfport. You are welcome to call the base Chapel at (504) 678-4522 if interested in attending workshops that will give you confidence and increase your competence in helping prevent the immediate risk of suicide. Moreover, these sessions would give you the abilities to move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or ignore suicidal behavior.

Suicide is preventable shipmates; let's join in the effort to achieve it. Your NAS JRB Religious Ministry Team promotes open communication and holds your conversation in confidence. Your chaplain is here to assist and support you and your families with dignity, respect, and compassion regardless of your belief. You are always welcome to come see us.

Peace,
Chaplain Lloyd


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The MOWC is a non-profit organization, whose purpose is to hold social functions for club members and their guests, which foster friendship and encourage the growth of existing ones; to raise funds to support community organizations adopted by the club, and to aid and assist in community work. The MOWC, as a non-profit service organization, has no paid positions. Membership dues are \$25 per person. For more information visit: <http://www.mowcnola.org>.

An adult annual event sponsored by the MOWC is the Krewe of CAMAN Mardi Gras ball. The next CAMAN (Coast Guard, Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, Navy) ball will be Jan. 17, 2015 at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel. The theme of the ball will be Fire and Ice. MOWC members and guests can purchase tickets now for this event. Tickets are \$75 per person and dress for the ball is service mess dress for military and formal/black tie for civilians. Ladies gowns must be floor length.

For more information and to make reservations send an email to: camanreservations@mowcnola.org.



Lt. Gen. Richard Mills, commander Marine Forces Reserve/ Marine Forces North, talks with Maj. Gen. Glenn H. Curtis, adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard, on the capabilities and the readiness of the Louisiana National Guard on Aug. 4, 2014, at Jackson Barracks' Fleming Hall in New Orleans. Jackson Barracks is the headquarters of the Louisiana National Guard.

Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Toby M. Valadie



MWR Spotlights September 2014

<h3>Boondoggles</h3> <p>Join the crowd on Saturday evenings for NFL Ticket and college football.</p>	<h3>Liberty Center</h3> <p>Bumper Soccer Sept. 22, from 4-10 p.m. Call 504-678-3509 for more details.</p>
<h3>Haunted Hay Trail</h3> <p>Commands can sign up now for the annual Haunted Trail which will be Oct. 24th & 25th. Call 504-678-3807 to register.</p>	<h3>Captain's Cup Bowling</h3> <p>Winter leagues are forming for the Captain's Cup bowling league. The organizational meeting will be Tuesday, Sept. 23 at 5:30 p.m. at Riverboat Lanes.</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pet Friendly/No pet rent • Reserved Parking • 24/7 Maintenance • Lawn Care/includes back yards • Pest Control • Community Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Happy Tails" Dog Park • 3 Boat/Recreational Vehicle Lots • *All Utilities Included • Community Garden • Resident Events • **Private fenced yards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Playgrounds • 2 Basketball Courts • \$20k Renter's Insurance • ADA Homes Available • Belle Chasse Academy • Numerous Base Amenities |
|---|--|--|

Military Rent = BAH • No upfront costs / No deposits / All utilities included* / Active Duty Payment in Arrears!

***Electric within normal usage band (RECP) ** 2BR up has a balcony**

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